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Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

Summary record of the 21st meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 12 November 2012, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Ms. Andamo (Vice-Chair) ..... (Thailand)

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Agenda item 53: Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories (*continued*)

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12-58531 (E)

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In the absence of Mr. Messone (Gabon), Ms. Andamo (Thailand), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10:10 a.m.

Agenda item 53: Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories (*continued*) (A/67/332, A/67/338, A/67/372, A/67/375, A/67/511 and A/67/550)

1. **Mr. Shaanika** (Namibia) noted that, once again, the Israeli Government had failed to respond to numerous requests from the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories. His delegation deplored the practices of the Israeli Government highlighted in the Special Committee's report (A/67/550), which violated the human rights of the Palestinian people. The expansion and construction of illegal settlements and the erection of annexation walls were meant to change facts on the ground. The illegal expansion and construction of Israeli settlements in and around East Jerusalem were nothing but an attempt to alter the legal status of the city and its physical, demographic and cultural character. His Government totally rejected those illegal actions, which violated the fundamental principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force. Israel's deplorable blockade of the Gaza Strip constituted collective punishment of the entire civilian population. Every country was entitled to adequate security, but not at the expense of human rights.

2. His delegation called on the international community to compel Israel to end its occupation of the Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, and to abide by its obligations under international humanitarian law. It looked forward to the admission of Palestine as a State Member of the United Nations and, ultimately, to the day when the Fourth Committee's programme of work would no longer include consideration of the current item.

3. **Mr. Tarar** (Pakistan) said that his delegation endorsed the recommendations in the Special Committee's report, which detailed Israel's continuing massive violations of the rights of the Palestinian people. He drew attention, in particular, to the detention of children, the use of administrative detention as a policy tool and an alternative to criminal proceedings and Israel's lamentable failure to implement fully the May 2012 agreement that had ended the mass hunger strike by Palestinians in Israeli detention. Israel's six-year blockade of Gaza continued to deprive residents of their means of livelihood and sustenance, while its illegal settlement policy remained in full force. His delegation deplored the Israeli Government's lack of commitment to a political settlement. A just, equitable and sustainable resolution of the Middle East conflict depended on the establishment of a sovereign, independent and viable Palestinian State based on the pre-1967 borders, with Jerusalem as its capital. His delegation welcomed the progress made by the Palestinian Authority in that regard and supported its initiative to obtain observer status in the United Nations system. In closing, he assured the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) of his Government's continued support.

4. **Mr. Sahraei** (Islamic Republic of Iran), expressing serious concern at the findings in the Special Committee's latest report, called for the Special Committee's recommendations to be implemented. That would ensure that the Israeli regime respected human rights and international humanitarian law and would put an end to its impunity in the occupied territories. His Government condemned Israel's illegal practices aimed at displacing the Palestinian civilian population from strategic areas of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. Those practices included the aggressive settlement campaign, the construction of the separation wall, forced evictions, home demolitions and the revocation of Palestinian residency rights.

5. The prolonged conflict and resulting suffering were the direct result of Israel's continued defiance of the international community and its flagrant disregard for international law, United Nations resolutions and the fundamental human rights of the Palestinian people. The United Nations and the international community must uphold their political, moral and legal responsibility to end the occupation and all Israel's violations against the Palestinian people.

6. His delegation reiterated its condemnation of the Israeli regime's inhumane and unlawful blockade of the Gaza Strip, which constituted a form of collective punishment and posed a serious threat to regional stability and international peace and security. The Israeli regime had also intensified its illegal settlement

activities in an attempt to further colonize the Occupied Palestinian Territory and change its demographic composition.

7. The occupation of Palestine lay at the heart of the protracted crisis in the Middle East. The Israeli regime's crimes against the Palestinians and other peoples in the region were the gravest threat currently posed to regional and international peace and security. His Government was also deeply concerned about the deterioration of the human rights situation and the increase in illegal Jewish settlements in the occupied Syrian Golan, which was an integral part of the territory of the Syrian Arab Republic.

8. **Mr. Selim** (Egypt) expressed grave concern at the long-standing pattern of systematic violations of human rights, including the rights of children, committed by Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, which showed that it considered itself above the law. Indeed, the scope and extent of those violations had increased. With regard to the situation in Gaza, which was a top priority for his Government, the ongoing Israeli blockade continued to inflict grave suffering on the Palestinian civilian population, particularly women and children, in clear violation not only of their human rights but also of international law. Israel's unlawful actions in the occupied Syrian Golan also constituted clear violations of international law and his Government demanded that Israel abide by Security Council resolution 497 (1981) and withdraw completely to the 4 June 1967 borders.

9. His Government fully supported the steps taken by the Palestinian leadership to achieve the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. His delegation called on all Member States to recognize the State of Palestine within the June 1967 borders and to support the Palestinian quest for full United Nations membership. It expected the General Assembly to adopt the draft resolution upgrading the status of Palestine to non-member observer State as a first step towards achieving full membership.

10. **Mr. Almakhadi** (Yemen) noted that Israel, the occupying Power, continued to violate international law, the Fourth Geneva Convention and numerous United Nations resolutions with its ongoing construction of the separation barrier and expansion of settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. It also continued to murder, starve and oppress Palestinians and to confiscate land, close border crossings and turn Gaza into the world's largest prison. The Special Committee's report described the human rights impact of the Gaza blockade, the restrictions on movement within the Gaza Strip and the denial of basic commodities to its residents. He called on the international community and the Security Council to work for a resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict and reaffirmed the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including the right to an independent State with East Jerusalem as its capital.

11. His delegation also condemned illegal Israeli settlement expansion and resource exploitation in the occupied Syrian Golan. The international community should put pressure on Israel to cease its violations of international law, comply with United Nations resolutions and withdraw from all the occupied Arab territories.

12. **Ms. Diaz Mendoza** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) called for an end to the complete impunity with which Israel had occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories and violated the human rights of their populations for many years. Not only was that situation the main obstacle to a just and lasting peace in the Middle East, but it was also preventing the Palestinian people from exercising their right to self-determination, including their right to live in freedom, justice and dignity and to establish a sovereign, independent State with East Jerusalem as its capital. Despite the announced easing of the blockade against Gaza, Israel was continuing to prevent essential imports and exports and the free movement of persons, thereby prolonging the humanitarian crisis.

13. Israel was weakening the fabric of Palestinian society by its deliberate policy of territorial and economic fragmentation and its attempts to alter the demographic composition of the Occupied Territories. In the West Bank, it was using various means to restrict Palestinians' access to their farmland, schools, medical services and places of worship and forcing thousands of families to live apart. Its expansion of settlements, construction of the separation wall, demolition of homes and expulsions were different facets of the same systematic strategy designed to sow havoc in the lives of people whose only crime was attachment to their country. Her delegation called on the international community to intensify its efforts to bring Israel into compliance with international human rights and humanitarian law and the relevant United Nations resolutions.

14. **Mr. Benmehidi** (Algeria) said that Israel's daily violations of Palestinians' human rights were stark evidence that it was not seeking peace. In addition to maintaining its inhumane blockade of the Gaza Strip, it was continuing to launch military attacks on Gaza, with complete disregard for the lives and safety of civilians in what was a densely populated territory. His delegation was disturbed to see that Israel was also continuing its unlawful arrests and detentions of thousands of Palestinian civilians, including women and children, and its illegal settlement activities, demolition of Palestinian homes and forced evictions, against a backdrop of escalating settler violence.

15. It was regrettable that all serious regional and international efforts to bring about a resumption of direct negotiations had failed, mainly owing to a lack of clear parameters and Israel's insistence on continuing its efforts to cleanse the Occupied Palestinian Territory of its indigenous Palestinian population. His delegation called on the international community to make every effort to compel Israel to abide by its obligations and resume final status negotiations based on clear parameters that included the cessation of all settlement activities, an agreed time frame and the establishment of an independent, democratic and viable Palestinian State within pre-1967 borders, in accordance with international law and the relevant United Nations resolutions. In closing, he called on all Member States to support the draft resolution on enhancing the status of Palestine within the United Nations.

16. **Ms. Albayraq** (United Arab Emirates) said that her country was deeply concerned about Israeli measures barring members of the Special Committee from visiting the Occupied Palestinian Territory, which had forced the Special Committee to rely on eyewitnesses to document Israeli violations of human rights and international law. The Special Committee's most recent report contained ample evidence of Israel's continued systematic aggression against the Palestinian people and residents of the occupied Syrian Golan. Israel's violations of human rights included repeated incursions into Palestinian cities and villages, collective punishment, arbitrary arrest and detention of civilians, expansion of settlements, seizure of land, demolition of homes, transfers of population, destruction of infrastructure, defilement of holy places, denial of rightful residence and restrictions on the movement of persons, food and basic commodities. In Gaza, Israel was withholding tax revenues owed to the Palestinian Authority and preventing implementation by UNRWA and other United Nations agencies of economic revitalization projects that might help to alleviate unemployment, poverty and malnutrition. She called on the international community to end its silence in the face of those violations and force Israel, the occupying Power, to desist from those practices, which were in clear violation of international human rights and humanitarian law.

17. Her delegation emphasized the need for the United Nations, particularly the Security Council, to take the necessary measures to ensure implementation of the recommendations contained in the Special Committee's report, particularly with regard to ending the blockade of Gaza and construction of the separation barrier. The mandate of the Office for the United Nations Register of Damage Caused by the Construction of the Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory should also be strengthened and Israel should pay suitable compensation to Palestinians and residents of the occupied Syrian Golan for all the human, material and psychological damage caused by the occupation. She hoped that the General Assembly would also strengthen the Special Committee's mandate.

18. **Mr. Adnan** (Indonesia) expressed his delegation's regret that Israel had once again ignored the Special Committee's request for access to the Occupied Territories. The information obtained by the Special Committee pointed to systematic Israeli policies and practices apparently designed either to force the Palestinian people from their land or to so severely marginalize them as to keep them permanently oppressed. That dismal picture discredited Israel's claim that it was committed to the principle of two States living side by side in peace and security. His delegation continued to support the two-State solution and believed that both parties must be encouraged to work hard to achieve it. However, Israel's practices in the Occupied Palestinian Territory were obviously aimed at frustrating such an outcome.

19. His delegation fully supported the recommendations in the Special Committee's report, many of which simply requested Israel to meet its obligations under international law. It joined in the call on Israel to lift its blockade of Gaza and to allow visits between Syrians in the occupied Syrian Golan and the rest of Syria. It reminded Israel that if the two-State

solution was to succeed in practice, it would have to be comprehensive and include complete Israeli withdrawal from occupied Lebanese land and the Syrian Golan.

20. **Mr. Mashabane** (South Africa) said that the international community must be consistent in promoting the universal applicability of international human rights instruments. Selectivity only served to engender impunity, as evidenced by Israel's persistent denial of the human rights of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Israel's illegal blockade of Gaza, forced removals, illegal settlement activity, destruction of Palestinian property, extension of the separation barrier and restrictions on freedom of movement violated international humanitarian and human rights law and were all obstacles to a peaceful, negotiated settlement. Indeed, 19 years after the Oslo Accords, not only had Israel failed to restore responsibility for law enforcement and development planning in Area C to the Palestinian Authority, but it was also seeking to push the Bedouin population and Palestinian pastoral farmers out of the region.

21. His delegation fully endorsed the recommendations in the Secretary-General's report on Israeli practices affecting the human rights of the Palestinian people (A/67/372), but regretted that they did not address the issue of the impunity with which the Israeli security forces violated international human rights and humanitarian law. Believing that the human rights of the Palestinian people could be guaranteed only within a secure Palestinian State, his Government supported the two-State solution. It lamented the Security Council's failure to agree to the admission of Palestine as a State Member of the United Nations and called on the international community to support Palestine's bid for enhanced observer status at the current session of the General Assembly.

22. **Mr. Ri** Kwang Nam (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) said that Israel's barbaric violations of the human rights of the Palestinian and other Arab peoples were based on a policy of hegemony, racism and territorial ambition facilitated by the connivance of the United States of America and its open opposition to the establishment and recognition of an independent Palestinian State. The Sixteenth Ministerial Conference of the Non-Aligned Movement had underscored the urgency of resolving the question of Palestine. Achieving peace in the Middle East called for an impartial negotiating process, and any resolution of the question of Palestine must be based on the immediate withdrawal of Israeli troops from all occupied territories and due compensation for the material and psychological damage inflicted on the Palestinian people.

23. **Mr. Alfadhli** (Kuwait) said that the Special Committee was to be commended for producing its report under difficult conditions. The report clearly showed the continuing aggressive, illegal Israeli practices, which ran contrary to international law and the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Israel's actions had led to the deterioration of the human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and had increased the Palestinians' suffering; severe restrictions on movement in and outside of the Gaza Strip had affected their health and education, and many of them had died owing to the excessive use of force by Israeli security forces.

24. The campaign to expand the settlements impeded peace. Israel's flouting of international law and of the relevant resolutions demonstrated its lack of interest in a peaceful solution. Rather, its aggressive expansionist policy sought to entrench the occupation and change the demographic nature of the land, practices denounced by his Government. Israeli forces had even violated holy sites sacred to both Christians and Muslims.

25. His Government fully supported the Palestinian people in its struggle for an independent State. He therefore denounced the inhumane, illegal blockade of Gaza and called on Israel to release all political prisoners and withdraw from the occupied Syrian Golan and Lebanese territories. His delegation reiterated its support for Palestine's full membership in the United Nations, which would constitute a step towards a just and lasting peace, and called on the international community to assume its responsibility under the Charter to find a solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict, one of the gravest threats to international peace and security in the Middle East. Israel should implement the recommendations of the Special Committee and the international community should bring pressure to bear on the Israeli Government so that it would cease its flagrant violations of international law in the occupied territories and abide by the resolutions of the United Nations and other initiatives that sought to reach a lasting and just peace in the region.

26. **Mr. Mohamed** (Sudan) said that the report of the Special Committee showed the further deterioration of the situation since the previous year in terms that did not seem to have changed. Indeed, the hope of a two-State solution had almost vanished and the international community appeared to be helpless to find a just and lasting solution to problem. According to the report, Israel's continued violations of international humanitarian law and human rights law had led to worsening conditions. Those violations included murder, attacks by settlers, arbitrary detentions, home demolitions, destruction of resources and infrastructure, construction of the separation wall and annexation of Palestinian lands. The expansion of settlements and cultural, religious and demographic changes in the character of Jerusalem, despite international condemnation; the relevant resolutions of the United Nations; and the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the legal consequences of the construction of a wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory had proven that Israel's flagrant violation of international law and the Charter continued with impunity. Settlement construction was an obstacle to peace and destroyed the two-State vision, discrediting Israel's claims that it desired a peaceful solution, an end to the suffering of the Palestinian people and the return of the refugees.

27. As a result of the blockade imposed on Gaza in violation of international law, the economy was on the point of collapse and unemployment had reached very high levels. His delegation supported the right of the Palestinian people to establish an independent State and of the refugees to return. It was high time for the international community to put an end to the Israeli occupation of Palestinian land and continued violation of various resolutions and laws, and for Israel to assume its responsibility to implement the Security Council resolutions on the establishment of an independent Palestinian State with Jerusalem as its capital and to withdraw from the occupied Golan Heights and Lebanese territory.

28. **Mr. Rahman** (Bangladesh) said that the Special Committee's report reflected, once again, the appalling human rights and humanitarian situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories; it was regrettable that international community's repeated appeals remained unheeded. The Palestinian people continued to suffer as a result of Israeli blockades, closures, confiscation of land, home demolitions and the illegal separation wall, which divided and isolated communities, destroyed livelihoods and denied hundreds of thousands of people access to their jobs, families, markets, schools and hospitals. Gaza's borders had been subjected to an unprecedented regime of closures aimed at strangling an entire population. Periodic escalation of violence only led to further despair and destitution, and Israel was purposely generating fear, fury and distress among Palestinians. His Government deplored the policies of collective punishment, forcing people off their land, prolonged detention without charge, restrictions on movement and property ownership, deportations and denial of access to such resources as water.

29. The continued construction of Jewish settlements in the occupied territories was particularly serious. The international community had repeatedly called for the cessation of such activities and Israel had repeatedly undertaken to do so. It was impossible to talk about restarting the peace process while the settlement activity continued unabated since those settlements posed a threat to the viability of a contiguous Palestinian State. In its advisory opinion, the International Court of Justice had described Israel's violation of the Palestinian people's right to self-determination as the violation of an *erga omnes* obligation: one of concern to all. If Member States were serious about peace in the Middle East, collective pressure must be exerted on Israel in order to make it stop expanding its illegal settlements and dismantle the existing ones.

30. His delegation urged Israel to fulfil its legal obligation, as the occupying Power, to ensure that all inhabitants were safeguarded against acts of violence or threats; cease the illegal detention of Palestinian people, including children; stop the destruction of homes and confiscation of land; give the Palestinians access to their land, to employment and to their natural resources; desist from transferring its population to the occupied territories; lift its embargo against Palestinians; and immediately open all border crossings to allow the free movement of goods, persons and humanitarian aid. Unless Israel withdrew, completely and unconditionally, from the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem and other occupied Arab lands, the hope of peace and prosperity in the Middle East would remain as elusive as ever.

31. **Ms. Al-Ghanem** (Qatar) said that her Government was deeply concerned about Israel's occupation of the Palestinian Territories and continued implementation of settlement policies, including in East Jerusalem. In so doing, the Israeli Government was endeavouring to impose a fait accompli and to Judaize the holy city, as reflected in its decision to demolish the Mughrabi Gate of Al-Haram al-Sharif (Temple Mount) in the Old City of Jerusalem, by obliterating the national and cultural identity of the Palestinian people.

32. The main cause of the continuation of the Arab-Israeli conflict was the continued military occupation, which constituted a violation of the human rights of an unarmed people under the pretext of combating violence and terrorism. The struggle for liberation from foreign occupation was a legitimate right that could not be equated with the military aggression by the occupation forces. Her Government condemned the recent attacks on the Gaza Strip, which had caused six deaths and wounded dozens of innocent civilians. The continued construction of the wall was another flagrant violation of international humanitarian and human rights law and of the relevant Security Council resolutions.

33. Among the most dangerous practices perpetrated by Israel against the Palestinians were its desecration of Islamic holy sites, including Al-Haram Al-Sharif, and its leniency with the extremist settlers who attacked those sites and assaulted worshippers. The Israeli authorities were expelling the Christian and Muslim occupants of Jerusalem and replacing them with Jewish settlers, undermining the possibility of a lasting, comprehensive peace based on the principle of the two-State solution with Israelis and Palestinians living side by side. The basic requirement for the success of any negotiations was the immediate and final cessation of settlement operations, not their suspension as some countries had suggested.

34. The unjust Israeli practices also affected the occupied Syrian Golan, where the Israeli authorities had denied the Arab population access to water resources, confiscated their land, uprooted trees, discriminated against Syrians who wished to obtain building permits and buried hazardous waste. The international community should shoulder its responsibility and compel Israel to comply without conditions with the relevant international resolutions, in particular Security Council resolution 497 (1981), which ruled that the Israeli decision to impose its laws, jurisdiction and administration in the occupied Syrian Golan Heights was null and void and without international legal effect.

35. Her Government considered that there was no room for establishing normal relations between the Arab States and Israel as long as the latter did not comply with international law and did not respect the principle of land for peace, which remained the foundation upon which negotiations between the Israeli and Palestinian authorities had been built since the 1991 Madrid Conference.

36. **Mr. Nitzan** (Israel) said that the current meeting offered a window into the theatre of the absurd: while 1.5 million Israelis were the victims of rocket and mortar attacks, the Committee had chosen to focus on a one-sided report that deliberately turned a blind eye to the truth. His Government held human rights in the highest possible regard and, as a vibrant democracy, had an independent, professional and highly respected judicial system that was accessible to all, citizens and foreigners alike. It was unfortunate that the Special Committee's report had not sought to advance human rights but had furthered a narrative aimed at discrediting Israel and denying the right of its citizens to live in peace and security. It did not mention the more than 1,000 rockets and mortar shells launched from the Gaza Strip against Israeli towns and villages in the past year; Hamas' well-known and cynical practice of placing its military installations near and inside civilian buildings, including close to United Nations facilities; or the hundreds of terrorist attacks launched from the Gaza Strip, terrorizing Israeli civilians.

37. The Special Committee proudly reported visiting Gaza in July 2011, during which month 28 rockets and mortar shells had been fired from Gaza, yet it had seen nothing, heard nothing and reported nothing. It had, however, reported hundreds of unsubstantiated claims of violence by Israeli settlers against Palestinians while ignoring all reports of Palestinian violence against Israelis. It had also completely ignored the violations of Palestinians' rights by other Palestinians, such as the persecution of the Palestinian homosexual community by Hamas and the Palestine Liberation Organization and the failure to protect Christians' freedom of religion and women's rights. As it was clear that the Special Committee predetermined its findings and

conclusions, Israel would continue to refuse to cooperate with it.

38. Many positive developments in the West Bank and Gaza over the previous year had been acknowledged by other bodies, including the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). For example, since June 2010, the Israeli Government had made significant policy changes with a view to liberalizing the system through which civilian goods entered Gaza — currently, the only restrictions were on weapons and dual-use items — yet the international community and the private sector in Gaza were using only 55 per cent of the existing capacity to transfer goods.

39. Israel was engaged with several United Nations agencies, international organizations and partner countries and had approved 219 school and housing projects in Gaza, even though the Hamas terror regime controlled the area and used it as a launching-ground for mortar fire on Israeli civilians and crossings used to transport goods. The 13 remaining roadblocks in the West Bank were constantly open unless there were specific security threats. Israel had transferred advance payments of 430 shekels to the Palestinian Authority in order to facilitate the timely payment of its employees and help it manage the current financial crisis. It had concluded arrangements for the transfer of goods and related tax procedures that would strengthen the economic base of the Authority and had increased the number of work permits for Palestinians in Israel by 40 per cent. It had also signed an agreement with a view to the construction of four new electricity substations that would supply additional electricity to the West Bank. None of those initiatives were mentioned in the report of the Special Committee.

40. It was absurd to hear condemnation and criticism of Israel's judiciary system and human rights record from countries that imprisoned their own human rights activists and lacked a free press or independent judiciary. The reports of international human rights organizations regarding the Arab countries and many other countries that so passionately criticized Israel clearly showed that they chose to point fingers at Israel because it was easier than attempting to improve human rights practices at home.

41. Israel was committed to reaching a permanent peace agreement with the Palestinians that would permit their two peoples to live in peace, security and dignity. His Government called on its Arab neighbours to join Israel in taking concrete, courageous steps to pursue the path of peace and challenged them to prove their commitment to the protection of human rights and human beings, regardless of creed, race or nationality. It called for an end to the cycle of inflammatory rhetoric that was constantly disrupting the work of the Fourth Committee and hoped that the scarce resources of the United Nations would be used for their intended purpose — to improve the lives of people — and that the Palestinians would rejoin Israel in direct negotiations without delay or preconditions.

42. **Ms. Rasheed** (Observer for Palestine), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that her delegation rejected Israel's reference to the current debate as a "theatre of the absurd". The Special Committee was mandated by the international community to investigate the practices not of Israel as a vibrant democracy, but of Israel as an occupying Power with more than 45 years of illegal practices that violated the human rights of Palestinians. Moreover, it appeared that the representative of Israel had not read the report, which did indeed mention the rockets fired. If Israel believed that Palestine would stop coming to the United Nations to discuss those issues, it was mistaken; surely it could not think that it could talk of peace while committing such violations. On the heels of a declaration of 1,200 new settlements, an additional 500 had recently been announced, belying the campaign of false statements about the good being done for the Palestinian people. Israel must cease its violations of basic human rights principles before peace and security could prevail for both sides.

The meeting rose at noon.

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Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

Summary record of the 22nd meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 13 November 2012, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Mr. Messone ..... (Gabon)

Contents

Agenda item 50: Effects of atomic radiation

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12-58693 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 50: Effects of atomic radiation (A/67/46)

1. **Mr. Weiss** (Germany), Chair of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation, attending the meeting by videolink from Vienna and accompanying his statement with a computerized slide presentation, introduced the report of the Scientific Committee on its fifty-ninth session (A/67/46). Recalling the mandate of the Scientific Committee, namely, to improve knowledge in the field of assessing the level and effects and risks of ionizing radiation for the General Assembly, the scientific community as a whole and the public at large, he reviewed the different sources of radiation exposure, both natural and artificial, and the different effects of such exposure, whether clinical, hereditary, foetal or cardiovascular. By publishing the results of its studies, the Scientific Committee served to underpin the global system of protection as defined by the standards of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

2. In 2012, the Committee's membership had been increased by six States, which meant that its meetings, normally held in May of each year, would now be attended by more than 140 scientists. That increased membership would also lead to lengthier discussions at the meetings but at the same time would bring considerable added value to the Committee's work.

3. He emphasized the need for the Committee to streamline its publishing process, yet without compromising quality, and to enhance the quality of its public information material, and he also encouraged financial contributions to support the Committee's work.

4. Turning to the scientific findings over the previous year, he identified as the key question the attribution of health effects on individuals following exposure to radiation. Certain reactions could be definitively attributed but only at high dosages and after other possible causes had been eliminated. Cancer, in particular, could not be unequivocally attributed to radiation exposure because of the long delay in its emergence and the absence, as yet, of any identified biomarkers for radiation. Increased rates of the incidence of cancer could only be attributed to ionizing radiation if that increase was higher than the statistical uncertainty of the investigation. At a natural background level, it was not possible to attribute increased rates reliably because of the high uncertainties at low dosages. Accordingly, the Scientific Committee strongly discouraged the computation of numbers of such effects following radiation exposures at low levels, such as had been practised following the great east-Japan earthquake and tsunami on 11 March 2011 and the resulting accident at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant.

5. The Committee was also giving its attention to the uncertainty of cancer risk estimates and their use as the basis for radiation protection. Radiation was much better understood than other carcinogens and the associated knowledge made it possible to quantify uncertainties relating to the analysis of results and their extrapolation to different situations. The Committee's study of such uncertainties had brought it to the conclusion that risk assessments of low dosage exposures were uncertain to a factor of three.

6. He showed a graph demonstrating the certainty with which radiation effects could be detected. The likelihood of such events increased dramatically with the dose: doses of above 5,000 millisieverts (mSv) would result in certain death, while exposures between the range of 1,000 and 500 mSv entailed a high risk of cancer, but that cause could only be definitively established in a large population. Exposure at 100 mSv represented the statistical limit for epidemiological study, while at doses below 100 mSv no risk to human population could be detected, although effects on biological specimens were observed.

7. The Committee had commenced its assessment of the doses resulting from the Fukushima accident and had recorded its preliminary findings in May 2012, which it had included in its current report, and would submit its final report to the General Assembly in May 2013. The assessment had involved over 80 experts, who had contributed their services free of charge, and strong channels had been established with Japanese experts working in the area. He also acknowledged with gratitude the contributions to the trust fund for extrabudgetary work, including from other international agencies. Preliminary findings indicated that no radiation health effects on either members of the public or response workers could be observed and, while six workers had died during the first year following the accident, none of those deaths had been attributable to high radiation doses. The maximum dose suffered by children in the area had been around 35 mSv — much lower than that experienced by children after the Chernobyl accident.

8. Looking forward, he outlined the reports which the Committee would finalize in 2013, namely, its report on the radiation effects of the Fukushima accident and a general report on radiation risks and effects on children. The second report had been prompted by the awareness of major gaps in basic scientific knowledge of those effects, revealed by the Fukushima accident. He also outlined four reports scheduled for 2014, whose production had been somewhat delayed by the Fukushima accident and the resulting work, and work planned for 2015.

9. In conclusion, he reiterated that the Committee's work was fundamental to the international radiation safety regime, contributing through national and regional initiatives to a sharing of objective and high quality scientific knowledge in that domain.

10. **Mr. Zhao** Xinli (China) asked whether the Scientific Committee should not also give its attention to the effects of radiation on women, given their particular vulnerability.

11. **Mr. Weiss** (Germany), Chair of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation, said that, while the Committee was indeed cognizant of the pronounced risks of radiation to women, especially pregnant women, those risks were much better understood than the risks to children and the Committee had accordingly decided on the current occasion to focus its attention on the latter. It would of course be prepared to take up the issue of risks to women at a later stage and he invited countries wishing it to do so to request such action when considering the Committee's future programme of work.

12. **Mr. Hallergard** (Observer for the European Union), speaking also on behalf of the acceding country Croatia; the candidate countries Iceland, Montenegro, Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; the stabilization and association process countries and potential candidates Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina; and, in addition, Armenia, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, said that the assessments undertaken by the Scientific Committee of the effects of radiation on human health and the environment were highly important in improving international scientific understanding of exposure to ionizing radiation. In that context, medical exposure to atomic radiation, which constituted by far the largest source of artificial radiation exposure, was an international priority in efforts to ensure radiation protection.

13. Welcoming the information exchange at the Scientific Committee's fifty-ninth session on the 2011 nuclear accident, he noted with satisfaction the availability of the Committee's extensive experience in the domain of assessing exposure following the accidental release of radionuclides. A number of European Union experts were helping the Committee in that area and he looked forward to its final report on the accident, which would, he hoped, be available for its sixtieth session.

14. Turning to the question of membership of the Scientific Committee, he welcomed the 2011 decision to admit Belarus, Finland, Pakistan, the Republic of Korea, Spain and Ukraine as members and affirmed that the Committee's current programme of work was in line with the European Union's own priorities. The European Union also welcomed the Committee's plan to pursue work on radiation risks and effects on children and believed that current research projects in the European Union would contribute key information to international efforts in that area.

15. Lastly, the Union welcomed work by the Scientific Committee to evaluate epidemiological studies related to environmental sources of radiation at low dose rates, which were in line with the multidisciplinary European low-dose initiative (MELODI) launched in 2010 with support from the European Union.

16. **Mr. Tsymbaliuk** (Ukraine) said that there was a continuing need to compile and examine information about atomic and ionizing radiation and its effects on human health and the environment, given the growing complexity and diversity of that information.

17. Following the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant in 1986, numerous international instruments had been set in place to ensure the highest level of nuclear, waste and radiation safety worldwide. In 2011, however, the international community had had to respond to another nuclear accident, at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant. Ukraine welcomed the Scientific Committee's resolve to make a comprehensive assessment of the levels of exposure and radiation risks attributable to that accident and looked forward to a complete report on its consequences at the Committee's sixtieth session in 2013. With its unparalleled experience in dealing with

the effects of radiation on human health and the environment and the extensive research which it had conducted into those effects, Ukraine stood ready to contribute to that effort.

18. Ukraine acknowledged progress by the Scientific Committee on assessing levels of radiation exposure from electricity generation; in updating the methodology for estimating human exposure from radioactive discharges, the effects of radiation exposure on children and the biological effects of certain internal emitters; and in evaluating epidemiological studies of environmental sources of radiation at low dose rates, among other topics. It also believed that the Scientific Committee should continue to review advances in the understanding of the biological mechanisms by which human health and non human biota were subject to radiation-induced effects. In that context, it encouraged special international organizations and other relevant institutions to work more closely with the Committee secretariat in establishing and coordinating arrangements for the collection and exchange of data on radiation exposure of the general public, workers and, in particular, medical patients.

19. Ukraine supported the existing proposals for the Scientific Committee's future programme of work, believing that the time had come to initiate the next global survey of medical radiation usage and exposures. It also highlighted the need for wide sharing of knowledge with the general public and, to that end, called on the United Nations Secretariat to continue streamlining procedures to make the Scientific Committee's scientific reports available as open publications, ideally within the same year as their approval.

20. **Mr. Hamed** (Syrian Arab Republic), commending the Scientific Committee on its valuable research, called for greater efforts to promote awareness among both national authorities and civil society in general of the harmful effects of atomic radiation on health and the environment. Recalling the accidents at the Chernobyl power plant in 1986 and the Fukushima power plant in 2011, he observed that such accidents could befall any reactor and expressed concern, accordingly, at the absence of any international supervision over Israel's nuclear facilities, which posed a major potential hazard to neighbouring States and the entire world. That hazard had even been confirmed by an Israeli scientist, one of the founders of the Dimona power plant, who had drawn attention to the age of the facility and maintained that it should have been closed many years previously. With cracks in its walls and its aging cooling towers, the Dimona reactor was a catastrophe-in-waiting. Accordingly, he urged the United Nations to insist that Israel place all its nuclear facilities under IAEA safeguards, in accordance with Security Council resolution 487 (1981), and eliminate its nuclear weapons.

21. He also voiced his country's concern at the dumping of nuclear waste in developing countries or on the high seas, with serious effects on the environment, noting in particular Israel's dumping of such waste in the Syrian Golan Heights, a practice which the world was observing in silence.

22. **Ms. Al-Barwari** (Iraq) said that her country was fully aware of the effects of ionizing radiation, as it had suffered such effects from the use of radioactive pollutants and armaments by previous regimes in Iraq. In response to that hazard, the Government had enacted a number of legislative and administrative measures to limit such emissions, with a view to protecting the population from the effects of radiation in agriculture, medicine and other domains. She stressed that protection of the Earth and the atmosphere was the shared responsibility of all humankind and, in particular, of those developed countries which used nuclear energy and, in that context, commended the United Nations on its efforts to monitor levels of nuclear radiation and the attendant effects and hazards and called on all States causing such effects to cooperate fully with the relevant international agencies. In addition, she expressed the hope that developed countries with experience in eliminating the effects of nuclear radiation would come to the assistance of Iraq.

23. **Mr. Zhao** Xinli (China) said that nuclear energy, with its comparative cleanliness, efficiency and stability, was indispensable to many countries. Yet major nuclear incidents had immense political, economic and psychological consequences for surrounding areas, and also for neighbouring countries and even the planet as a whole. Accordingly, the international community must promote a science-based understanding of nuclear safety, enhance the safety and reliability of nuclear energy and promote its sustainable development in a manner that genuinely benefited populations.

24. At the same time, small-scale harm from radiation often went unnoticed. While there had been a sharp increase in the use of mobile sources of radiation for medical treatment, industrial and agricultural production and scientific research, regulation and capacity-building in preventing and treating associated radiation-related injuries remained far from adequate.

25. For the United Nations to play a more extensive role in ensuring nuclear radiation safety, such safety must be accorded the highest priority. Nuclear energy should only be developed in conditions in which the environment, public health and social harmony were safeguarded. Safety should also be a top priority in all planning, construction, operation and decommissioning of nuclear power plants and in the design, use, transport, storing and dismantling of mobile radiation sources. Safety standards should also be raised: new nuclear power projects must comply with the world's highest standards for nuclear safety. Emergency planning measures must be enhanced: the international community should establish and improve coordination arrangements and set in place standardized and uniform emergency plans in the event of nuclear disasters.

26. In addition, the working arrangements of the Scientific Committee must be improved. With its enlarged membership, the Committee would need to enhance its efficiency, ensure balanced regional representation and meet the needs of the growing number of member States participating in its work. Lastly, it should consider undertaking radiation-related psychological studies, given the substantial and long-lasting psychological effects on societies and individuals of major incidents such as that at the Fukushima nuclear facility.

27. The Chinese Government attached great importance to the safety of atomic radiation and, in the aftermath of the Fukushima accident, had further reinforced its nuclear safety and nuclear emergency preparedness. To that end, Premier Wen Jiabao had initiated discussion of a number of China's major legislative instruments in that area. In addition, the Government had published its 12th five-year plan for nuclear emergencies and was fully engaged in international cooperation in the domain of nuclear safety. In conclusion, he pledged his country's willingness to work towards deeper international exchanges and cooperation to enhance nuclear safety at the global level.

28. **Mr. Díaz Bartolomé** (Argentina) reiterated his country's strong support for the work of the Scientific Committee and expressed appreciation, in particular, for the scientific report on attributing health effects to radiation exposure and inferring the risks, work of vital importance for understanding the epistemology of the highly controversial issue of the effects and risks of low-dose radiation. Noting that the related scientific analysis had been carried out in response to a specific formal request from the Argentine Government, he recalled that it set out preliminary results of a study of the Fukushima accident and reiterated his country's solidarity with the people and authorities of Japan. Argentine experts were actively involved in efforts to help protect the Japanese population from the effects of that accident. His country was also heartened by the finding, in the Scientific Committee's report, that, to date, no effects attributable to radiation exposure had been detected in the health of workers or that of children and other people in the area.

29. Turning to the continued work of the Scientific Committee, he drew attention to the problem of its long-term financing, noting that the extrabudgetary contributions from the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) were insufficient to meet its needs and, in any event, could be seen as compromising the integrity and independence of the Scientific Committee. Accordingly, his Government's policy had been to make substantive contributions to support the work of the Scientific Committee and it urged UNEP to strengthen the Committee's funding, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 65/96 and the draft resolution under consideration at the current session.

30. **Mr. Takahashi** (Japan) said that, as a country with a long-standing commitment to the safety of nuclear technology, Japan had directly benefited from the work of the Scientific Committee and, in the light of the tragic nuclear accident in Japan in 2011, it was all the more cognizant of the critical role played by the Committee in that field. Accordingly, it welcomed the Committee's stated intention to complete at the next session its assessment of the exposure levels and radiation risks attributable to the Fukushima accident and recorded its appreciation for the Committee's work in that area, including the dispatch of experts to Japan in August 2012 to conduct the assessment in cooperation with Japanese experts.

31. Noting the inestimable importance of the safety and security of human beings and the environment in the use of radiation and nuclear energy and of safeguarding public health in the use of radiation for medical purposes, he drew attention to the Fukushima Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety, to be held in December 2012 in co-sponsorship with IAEA. Lastly, he reaffirmed Japan's continued commitment and support for the important work of the Scientific Committee.

32. **Mr. Zdorov** (Belarus) said that the authority of the Scientific Committee as a major source of information on radiation effects continued to grow, in particular in the aftermath of the Fukushima accident, which had revealed gaps in knowledge about the threats and risks to populations and the environment of such accidents. The participation of Belarusian experts in the response to that accident had presented a good opportunity for the exchange of first-hand experience in coping with the effects of a nuclear accident. Belarus also hoped to benefit from that exchange in applying new international experience and expertise to its efforts to rehabilitate regions affected by the Chernobyl accident.

33. The rehabilitation and sustainable development of those regions remained a priority for his country and, in that context, he applauded the work by the Scientific Community on that issue. His delegation also noted with gratification the adoption of General Assembly resolution 66/70 of 9 December 2011, extending full membership of the Scientific Committee to, among other States, Belarus, thus recognizing the contribution by Belarus and those other countries to the Committee's work. That expansion of the Committee's membership would help resolve a number of pressing issues on its agenda, including the need to secure additional expertise and funding for its work, without entailing a significant increase in its own budget or an additional burden on the secretariat. Lastly, as one of the sponsors of the draft resolution before the Committee, Belarus was resolved to continue its active participation in the work of the Scientific Committee in all existing and future areas of enquiry.

34. **Mr. Sitnikov** (Russian Federation) said that his country had participated actively in the work of the Scientific Committee since its creation in 1955 and was gratified by the authority which the Committee's substantial reports enjoyed in the scientific world. The Russian Federation welcomed the expansion of the Committee's membership to include six new States and noted, in particular, the valuable contribution that Belarus and Ukraine would bring to the Committee's work, with their experience in tackling the consequences of the Chernobyl accident.

35. He also noted the importance of the Committee's scientific work in the response to the Fukushima accident and stressed the need for the Committee to continue focusing on the analysis of the radiation consequences of such accidents. As one of the countries directly affected by the Chernobyl accident, the Russian Federation attached great importance to nuclear safety and applied the highest international standards in that area, as confirmed by many IAEA missions to Russian nuclear facilities.

36. The Fukushima accident had highlighted the need to strengthen the international legislative framework governing nuclear safety. To that end, the Russian Federation had submitted proposals on removing lacunae in international instruments in that area, including by supplementing the Convention on Nuclear Safety and the Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident and by improving the IAEA safety standards, and he hoped that its initiative would be widely supported and implemented.

37. **Mr. De Vega** (Philippines) said that, while there were manifest benefits from the use of radioactive materials, particularly in medicine and power generation, that use also entailed risks and hazards and the international community must therefore ensure that the benefits were harnessed in the best interests of all populations. The Scientific Committee had a vital role to play in that endeavour.

38. His delegation commended the Committee's decision to carry out an assessment of the exposure and radiation risks attributable to the Fukushima accident and welcomed the participation in that study of other international agencies with wide-ranging experience and expertise. He stressed the importance of providing timely and accurate information for that study, as had already been provided by member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and, in that context, called for continuing capacity-building for developing States to strengthen their data gathering and management skills and capabilities. His delegation, however, shared the concern expressed by the Scientific Committee about crowd-sourcing websites,

which, while constituting useful independent sources of information, must be used with great caution.

39. His delegation looked forward with particular interest to the Committee's assessments based on the thyroid monitoring of children and the data to be provided on radionuclide concentrations in foodstuffs and welcomed its undertaking to complete its work on the effects of radiation exposure to children by its sixtieth session. Noting the relative lack of studies of the exposure of non-human biota to radionuclide releases, particularly in marine environments, he called for authoritative studies to be undertaken of that issue and also endorsed the Committee's desire to press ahead with its next global survey of medical radiation usage and exposures.

40. Outlining issues of particular concern to his delegation, he drew attention to occupational exposure to radiation, noting that worldwide some 3 million persons worked in the nuclear industry and the corresponding urgent need to update the minimum standards of exposure. The regulations on the handling and disposal of waste materials in medical facilities should also be updated. Better information management and dissemination were also needed, to allay unwarranted public anxiety over radiation exposure, particularly in emergency situations, and, in that context, his country welcomed the regular publications of IAEA and other United Nations agencies on the topic of atomic radiation and commended the Agency and the Scientific Committee on their websites, encouraging them to make their user interfaces as friendly as possible.

41. Turning to the issue of nuclear safety and security, the Philippines called on States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to comply fully with the provisions of the final outcome documents of the 2010 Review Conference and of other international instruments in that field. The Philippines also called for capacity building in nuclear detection, forensics and response and mitigation at national and regional levels and for strengthened regional cooperation in that area. It also urged IAEA to continue providing assistance to ensure the safe and secure use of nuclear technologies. Lastly, he highlighted the need to review the global framework for emergency preparedness and response, in particular in the light of the Fukushima accident, which had revealed shortcomings in a number of provisions of the Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident and the Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency.

42. **Mr.** Manjeev **Singh Puri** (India) said that the Scientific Committee's report demonstrated the continued high quality of its work and he welcomed the progress made towards finalizing the scientific analysis of the attribution of health effects to radiation and the uncertainties in the risk assessment for cancer due to radiation exposure. He also welcomed the planned formation of an expert group to compile data on discharges during nuclear electricity generation.

43. In that context, reaffirming his country's conviction that nuclear energy was an essential energy source, he stressed the need to address nuclear safety concerns which had been brought to light by the Fukushima accident and which must be resolved to restore public confidence in nuclear energy. India was heartened by the critical analysis of the accident already undertaken by the Scientific Committee to allay public fears end and had provided its own data for that purpose. Observing that the Fukushima accident had diverted the Committee's attention from its original plan of work and strained its budgetary resources, he stressed the need to strengthen those resources and, given the inevitable overlap between various bodies in the United Nations system working on assessments of the accident, for careful coordination among them.

44. Given the authority which the Scientific Committee enjoyed in its field, it was imperative that it take up the issue of the mechanism of radiation action at low doses and dose rates and make public its findings, thereby greatly benefiting the scientific community.

45. Turning to the issue of radiation effects on children, which had been given prominence by the Chernobyl and Fukushima accidents and was also of growing concern with the increased use of radiation on children in medical procedures, he was gratified that the Committee would also be undertaking an assessment of that issue as part of its programme of work. Given that data on medical exposure were not easily available in most countries, he urged the Scientific Committee to work closely with IAEA, the World Health Organization and national health authorities through a global medical exposure survey and pledged his country's cooperation in that endeavour.

46. Noting also that epidemiological studies formed a major source of the Scientific Committee's risk estimates, and given the scarcity of studies on human populations exposed to very low level chronic radiation, he drew attention to the epidemiological and genetic studies carried out in India of populations living in areas of high-level natural radiation. Those studies had indicated that there was no significant increase in the incidence of cancer and no association between high natural radiation levels and birth malformations, such as Down syndrome. In that context, he commended the Committee on its decision to prepare a scientific document analysing the epidemiological studies on low-level chronic radiation exposures from natural and artificial radiation sources.

47. In conclusion, he reaffirmed India's continued resolve to contribute in every possible manner to the work of the Scientific Committee.

Draft resolution A/C.4/67/L.8 on the effects of atomic radiation

48. **The Chair** drew attention to the draft resolution on the effects of atomic radiation and informed the Committee that Armenia, China, India, Italy, Latvia, Monaco, Norway and Peru had joined its sponsors. He confirmed that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

49. **Mr. Silberberg** (Germany) introduced the text of the resolution, drawing attention to its salient points and noting the broad agreement on the continuing need for an authoritative scientific body in the United Nations dealing with the effects of atomic radiation, disseminating important information and reacting to new circumstances. The draft resolution endorsed the Committee's intention to complete at its next session an assessment of the levels of radiation exposure and radiation risks attributable to the Fukushima accident and also a report on the effects of radiation exposure on children. Given the pressure on the Committee to take up other issues related to the effects of radiation, requiring additional resources, the resolution also called on all Member States to continue their support for its work, and the large number of States sponsoring the draft resolution sent a strong message of that support.

50. *Draft resolution A/C.4/67/L.8 was adopted.*

The meeting rose at 11.50 a.m.

United Nations A/C.4/67/SR.23

General Assembly
Sixty-seventh session

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Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

Summary record of the 23rd meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 15 November 2012, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Mr. Messone ..... (Gabon)

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Agenda item 116: Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly

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Completion of the Committee's work

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12-59200 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 52: United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (*continued*) (A/C.4/67/L.10-L.13)

Agenda item 53: Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories (*continued*) (A/C.4/67/L.14-L.18)

1. **The Chair** invited the Committee to consider the draft resolutions submitted under agenda items 52 and 53, noting that they had no programme budget implications.

2. **Mr. Khan** (Indonesia), introducing the four draft resolutions under agenda item 52 (A/C.4/67/L.10-L.13), said that the texts reflected the strong support of the international community for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and for its mandate. He expressed the hope that they would receive overwhelming support in the Committee.

3. **Mr. León González** (Cuba), introducing the five draft resolutions under agenda item 53 (A/C.4/67/L.14-L.18), said that the human rights situation of the civilian populations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the occupied Syrian Golan remained critical as a result of Israel's violations of human rights and international law. The situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, still required the attention of the international community, especially in view of Israel's illegal settlement campaign. Tensions had increased, jeopardizing the possibility of achieving a two-State solution based on pre-1967 borders. The Gaza Strip was also a matter of concern. He called on the members of the Committee to support the draft resolutions.

Draft resolution A/C.4/67/L.10: Assistance to Palestine refugees

4. **Ms. Herity** (Secretary of the Committee) announced that Albania, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Croatia, France, Latvia, Portugal, Romania, Senegal, Serbia, Slovenia, Sweden and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution.

5. *A recorded vote was taken.*

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Liberia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, South Sudan, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

Israel.

Abstaining:

Cameroon, Canada, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Palau, United States of America.

6. *Draft resolution A/C.4/67/L.10 was adopted by 165 votes to 1, with 6 abstentions.*[1]

Draft resolution A/C.4/67/L.11: Persons displaced as a result of the June 1967 and subsequent hostilities

7. **Ms. Herity** (Secretary of the Committee) announced that Brunei Darussalam and Senegal had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution.

8. *A recorded vote was taken.*

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, South Sudan, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

Canada, Israel, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Palau, United States of America.

Abstaining:

Cameroon, Honduras, Panama, Papua New Guinea.

9. *Draft resolution A/C.4/67/L.11 was adopted by 163 votes to 6, with 4 abstentions.*[2]

Draft resolution A/C.4/67/L.12: Operations of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

10. **Ms. Herity** (Secretary of the Committee) announced that Brunei Darussalam and Senegal had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution.

11. *A recorded vote was taken.*

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao

[1] The delegations of the Comoros and Lesotho subsequently informed the Committee that they had intended to vote in favour of the draft resolution.

[2] The delegation of the Comoros subsequently informed the Committee that it had intended to vote in favour of the draft resolution.

People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, South Sudan, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

Canada, Israel, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Palau, United States of America.

Abstaining:

Cameroon.

12. *Draft resolution A/C.4/67/L.12 was adopted by 166 votes to 6, with 1 abstention.*[3]

Draft resolution A/C.4/67/L.13: Palestine refugees' properties and their revenues

13. **Ms. Herity** (Secretary of the Committee) announced that Albania, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Croatia, France, Latvia, Portugal, Romania, Senegal, Serbia, Slovenia, Sweden and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution.

14. *A recorded vote was taken.*

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, South Sudan, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

Canada, Israel, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Palau, United States of America.

Abstaining:

Cameroon, Papua New Guinea.

[3] The delegation of the Comoros subsequently informed the Committee that it had intended to vote in favour of the draft resolution.

15. *Draft resolution A/C.4/67/L.13 was adopted by 164 votes to 6, with 2 abstentions.*[4]

16. **Mr. Hamed** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that, as in previous years, his country had strongly supported all the draft resolutions submitted under agenda item 52 owing to the important role that UNRWA played in his country, as well as in Jordan, Lebanon and the Occupied Palestinian Territory. With regard to the deep concern expressed at the situation of Palestine refugees in the Syrian Arab Republic, he said that his country also deeply regretted the casualties among Palestine refugees and UNRWA staff. Without the measures taken by specialized agencies in the Syrian Arab Republic to protect the refugees and staff from armed terrorists, the number of those casualties would have been greater. The Syrian Arab Republic hosted over half a million Palestine refugees and would spare no efforts to protect them and help them lead a dignified life until their return to Palestine.

17. **Ms. Arbell** (Israel) reiterated her country's support for the humanitarian aspects of the work carried out by UNRWA. Israel would continue do its utmost to continue that support while maintaining its own security. However, Israel had been obliged to vote against the draft resolutions submitted under agenda item 52 as they were clearly politically driven and did not reflect her country's close cooperation with the Agency. The Agency's mandate was designed to perpetuate the Palestinian refugees' suffering rather than help them lead prosperous and productive lives. The draft resolutions had once again failed to mention the security threats to Israel or the problems that UNRWA faced in Gaza owing to the Hamas reign of terror and the attacks on civilians, including Palestinian refugees, in the Syrian Arab Republic. One-sided resolutions that ignored the culpability of any entity other than Israel served no purpose other than scoring cheap political points at Israel's expense.

18. **Mr. Hamed** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that the representative of Israel had tried to distract the Committee's attention from the Agency's important work with false allegations. It was ironic that Israel should express concern at the plight of Palestine refugees in the Syrian Arab Republic, when Israel had been responsible for their expulsion from their homeland by violent means over many decades. Israel must stop challenging the unprecedented international consensus in favour of resolutions that condemned it and demanded that it guarantee the return of Palestine refugees to their country. The inhumane siege of Gaza had not satisfied Israel's hatred of Palestinians but it had attacked the population and killed hundreds of civilians, including women, children and elderly people. By voicing concern at the conditions of Palestine refugees in the Syrian Arab Republic, the representative of Israel undermined the Committee's work.

Draft resolution A/C.4/67/L.14: Work of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories

19. **Ms. Herity** (Secretary of the Committee) announced that Brunei Darussalam and Senegal had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution.

The meeting was suspended at 11.10 a.m. and resumed at 11.50 a.m.

20. *A recorded vote was taken.*

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Chile, China, Comoros, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Gabon, Ghana, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

[4] The delegations of the Comoros and Jamaica subsequently informed the Committee that they had intended to vote in favour of the draft resolution.

Against:

Australia, Canada, Israel, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Palau, Panama, United States of America.

Abstaining:

Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Austria, Bahamas, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, El Salvador, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Samoa, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Tuvalu, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay, Vanuatu.

21. *Draft resolution A/C.4/67/L.14 was adopted by 91 votes to 8, with 71 abstentions.*[5]

Draft resolution A/C.4/67/L.15: Applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949, to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the other occupied Arab territories

22. **Ms. Herity** (Secretary of the Committee) announced that Brunei Darussalam and Senegal had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution.

23. *A recorded vote was taken.*

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, South Sudan, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

Canada, Israel, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Palau, United States of America.

Abstaining:

Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu.

24. *Draft resolution A/C.4/67/L.15 was adopted by 163 votes to 6, with 4 abstentions.*[6]

[5] The delegations of Guinea and Tuvalu subsequently informed the Committee that they had intended to vote in favour of the draft resolution.

[6] The delegations of Chile and Madagascar subsequently informed the Committee that they had intended to vote in favour of the draft resolution.

Draft resolution A/C.4/67/L.16: Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan

25. **Ms. Herity** (Secretary of the Committee) announced that Brunei Darussalam and Senegal had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution.

26. **Mr. Aquino** (Peru), speaking in explanation of vote before the voting, said that Peru would vote in favour of draft resolution A/C.4/67/L.16. In keeping with its consistent position, Peru was in favour of a two-State solution that would guarantee for both parties the right to live in peace within secure and recognized borders and free from threats or acts of force. Peru held the view that the Israeli settlements were illegal, and joined the international call for the peace process to be resumed immediately on the basis of full compliance by all parties with their obligations under previous agreements, especially the Quartet road map, and under international law, including the resolutions adopted in the framework of the United Nations.

27. *A recorded vote was taken.*

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, South Sudan, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan. Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

Canada, Israel, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Palau, United States of America.

Abstaining:

Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Honduras, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu.

28. *Draft resolution A/C.4/67/L.16 was adopted by 163 votes to 6, with 6 abstentions.*

Draft resolution A/C.4/67/L.17: Israeli practices affecting the human rights of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem

29. **Ms. Herity** (Secretary of the Committee) announced that Brunei Darussalam and Senegal had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution.

30. *A recorded vote was taken.*

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burundi, Cambodia, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti,

Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, South Sudan, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

Australia, Canada, Israel, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Palau, Panama, United States of America.

Abstaining:

Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, El Salvador, Honduras, Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu.

31. *Draft resolution A/C.4/67/L.17 was adopted by 160 votes to 8, with 6 abstentions.*

Draft resolution A/C.4/67/L.18: The occupied Syrian Golan

32. **Ms. Herity** (Secretary of the Committee) announced that Belarus, Brunei Darussalam and Senegal had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution.

33. *A recorded vote was taken.*

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, South Sudan, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

Israel, Panama.

Abstaining:

Cameroon, Canada, Côte d'Ivoire, Georgia, Honduras, Marshall Islands, Micronesia

(Federated States of), Palau, Papua New Guinea, Tonga, Ukraine, United States of America, Vanuatu.

34. *Draft resolution A/C.4/67/L.18 was adopted by 161 votes to 2, with 13 abstentions.*

35. **Ms. Ventura** (Canada) said that her Government supported a two-State solution to the Israel-Palestine conflict, a solution which should be reached through a negotiated settlement between the parties that would guarantee Israel's right to live in peace and security with its neighbours and lead to the creation of a viable and independent Palestinian State. The Quartet statement of 23 September 2011 provided a good basis on which to move forward.

36. On the issue of both parties having a positive role to play in a lasting peace, Canada had long been concerned by the sheer number of United Nations resolutions critical solely of Israel. No other conflict in the world had absorbed so much time and energy on the part of Member States, even though there were many other longstanding conflicts. The draft resolutions before the Committee did not address the complexities of the issues or the actions and responsibilities of all parties concerned. As a package, they were one-sided and unbalanced, made no reference to terrorist activities carried out by Hamas and others against Israel, and were thus ultimately unhelpful to the cause of a lasting negotiated peace. There were important elements in the draft resolutions that needed to be discussed, but they were drowned out by their unbalanced nature.

37. **Mr. Sahraei** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that his delegation had voted in favour of draft resolutions A/C.4/67/L.14-L.18 to show its solidarity with the Palestinian people and stress the importance of international recognition of the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to defend themselves from foreign occupation and aggression. Owing to lack of attention to the root causes of the Palestinian crisis, it had remained unresolved for more than six decades, and the illegal occupation of Palestinian and other Arab territories by the Israeli regime had continued, as had the persistent violations of the rights of the Palestinian people, including the right to self-determination and the right of the Palestine refugees to return to their homeland. His delegation believed that lasting peace could be achieved only through an end to discrimination and to the occupation of all Palestinian territories, the return of all Palestinian refugees to their homeland and the establishment of a democratic Palestinian State with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital.

38. **Ms. Abdelhady-Nasser** (Observer for Palestine) thanked all the delegations that had voted in favour of the draft resolutions introduced under agenda items 52 and 53. They had reaffirmed the human rights of the Palestinian people, including the Palestine refugees, and the core principles of international law in the exercise of multilateral diplomacy. They had not scored cheap political points, as the representative of Israel had claimed.

39. Palestine was grateful for the international community's commitment to UNRWA and, in particular, for the significant support of host nations and the donor community pending a just solution to the plight of Palestine refugees, on the basis of General Assembly resolution 194 (III).

40. The draft resolutions reaffirmed that the right of the Palestine refugees to return had not diminished over time and that the rule of law and international humanitarian law — and not the laws of brutality and power — should prevail. While reaffirming the Palestinian people's rights, the adoption of the draft resolutions constituted a clear rejection of Israel's human rights violations, including in the Gaza Strip, where another devastating Israeli onslaught was feared. Her delegation condemned all acts of violence against civilians and stressed the need to protect them in armed conflict. A clear message had been sent to Israel that its violations of international law would not be tolerated.

41, Those who truly supported the cause of peace must remain consistent in their demand for full compliance by Israel, the occupying Power, with all its obligations under international law. Rather than depriving the Palestinian people of their inalienable rights, including the right to self-determination, and denying Palestine its freedom as an independent State with East Jerusalem as its capital, Israel must be held accountable to the Charter of the United Nations and the rule of international law.

42. **Mr. Hamed** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that the support for the draft resolutions adopted under agenda items 52 and 53 reflected the international community's rejection of human rights violations and of occupation by force. The draft resolutions sent a clear message to Israel to end its occupation of all the occupied Arab territories and to cease its violations of

the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949. In particular, the adoption by an overwhelming majority of Member States of the resolution on the occupied Syrian Golan (A/C.4/67/L.18) confirmed that Israel's attempts to annex the occupied Syrian Golan, impose its laws, jurisdiction and administration, build and expand settlements and pursue racist practices against the Syrian people of the Golan, in violation of international law, were null and void and without international legal effect. Those measures recalled the darkest days of modern history when, at the beginning of the Second World War in Europe, a particular State had attacked and annexed parts of other countries.

43. The Israeli delegation had voted against the draft resolution on the occupied Syrian Golan and all the other draft resolutions just adopted. In so doing, it had unequivocally departed from the international consensus, in defiance of the United Nations and international law. He called on those few delegations that had abstained from voting on the draft resolution on the occupied Syrian Golan to join the international consensus and vote in favour when it went before the plenary Assembly. Any failure to condemn the Israeli occupation and annexation would send the wrong message to those who broke the law, suggesting that the law of the jungle had taken the place of international law and that law-breakers enjoyed impunity. He invited delegations that had voted against any of the draft resolutions to put themselves in the position of the Arab civilians in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the occupied Syrian Golan for just one day in order to understand their terrible suffering.

Agenda item 116: Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly (A/C.4/67/L.9)

Draft decision A/C.4/67/L.9: Proposed programme of work and timetable of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) for the sixty-eighth session of the General Assembly

44. *Draft decision A/C.4/67/L.9 was adopted.*

Agenda item 54: Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects (A/67/312–S/2012/645)

Draft resolution A/C.4/67/L.19/Rev.1: Comprehensive review of special political missions

45. **The Chair** drew attention to the fact that the draft resolution before the Committee had not been issued a full 24 hours before it was to be considered. He would take it that the Committee was willing to waive the 24-hour rule under rule 120 of the rules of procedure and to take action on the draft resolution.

46. *It was so decided.*

47. **Mr. de Alba** (Mexico), introducing the draft resolution, submitted a number of oral amendments to A/C.4/67/L.19/Rev.1 intended to address the concerns expressed by several delegations. At the end of the fifth preambular paragraph the following words had been added: "recognizing that the Fifth Committee is the appropriate Main Committee of the General Assembly entrusted with responsibilities for administrative and budgetary matters". The second operative paragraph had been amended to read: "Requests the Secretary-General to report on overall policy matters pertaining to special political missions, including their evolution and trends, as well as their role in activities of the Organization relating to the maintenance of international peace and security, and to make recommendations to increase their overall transparency and effectiveness". Lastly, in paragraph 3, the words "consultations on matters" had been replaced with the phrase "inclusive and interactive exchanges on overall policy matters".

48. He expressed his gratitude for the contributions to the drafting exercise, in particular those made by the delegations of Egypt, Finland, Indonesia, the European Union and the members of his own regional group. The United Nations would be taking an important step towards understanding one of its most important tools for promoting peace and security. The aim of the draft resolution was to strengthen discussion, transparency and exchanges of views among Member States, the Secretariat and all stakeholders.

49. **The Chair** announced that Belize had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution.

50. **Ms. Herity** (Secretary of the Committee), speaking on the programme budget implications of the draft resolution, said that, under the terms of paragraph 2 of the draft resolution, the General Assembly would request the Secretary-General to submit a report on all policy matters pertaining to Special Political Missions. Should the General Assembly adopt the draft resolution, it was anticipated that the additional documentation services workload resulting from that

request would entail additional requirements of $50,900 under section 2 of the programme budget for the biennium 2012-2013. However, every effort would be made to absorb the additional requirements within existing resources under section 2.

51. *Draft resolution A/C.4/67/L.19/Rev.1, as orally amended, was adopted.*

52. **Ms. Finerty** (United States of America) said that her country strongly supported special political missions, in view of the unique capabilities that they provided to the United Nations. Along with many others, her delegation had expressed concern that the resolution had been submitted under agenda item 54. However, it seemed that the resolution would ensure the appropriate distinction was made between special political missions and peacekeeping missions.

53. Her delegation had reservations about the draft resolution, which had been introduced only a week earlier, in particular because its subject matter was being considered in another Main Committee of the General Assembly. Nevertheless the resolution respected the primary role of the Security Council for the maintenance of peace and security, and avoided the administrative and budgetary aspects under consideration in the Fifth Committee. The sponsors had accommodated all the delegations' concerns raised during consultations. Finally, her delegation insisted that every effort be made to make the resolution cost-neutral.

54. **Mr. Green** (United Kingdom), recalling that special political missions often dealt with very sensitive issues, said that while transparency was crucial for improving the understanding of the Member States it should not undermine the functioning of the missions. In further deliberations on the issue, it would be important to respect the balance between the principal organs of the United Nations. Since flexibility was intrinsic to the effectiveness of the missions, his country would strongly resist any policy that impinged on it. As recalled in the resolution, the Fifth Committee had responsibilities for administrative and budgetary matters.

55. **Mr. Furno** (France) said that his country was committed to the delimitation of powers of the Main Committees of the General Assembly and fully respected the prerogatives of the principal organs of the United Nations as set out in the Charter. The dialogue between the Secretariat and Member States should lead to examination of cross-cutting issues but not give rise to discussion of individual special political missions.

56. **Mr. Alden** (Sweden), welcoming the adoption of the resolution, said that the proposed outcome must have no impact on assessed contributions.

Completion of the Committee's work

57. **The Chair** said that the work of the Fourth Committee was mainly political and, as agreed by the members of the Committee, that character should be retained and strengthened. At the same time, the Committee also covered other important issues that related to many other aspects of the work of the Secretariat, such as public information, outer space and atomic radiation. The agenda items allocated to the Committee provided opportunities for delegations to consider those issues in an in-depth manner and to benefit from the flexible working methods adopted by the Committee in recent years. The format of interactive dialogue had proven to be very useful and informative.

58. After reviewing the work accomplished under each agenda item during the session, he declared that the Committee had completed its work at the main part of the sixty-seventh session of the General Assembly.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.